



# Northeast Regional Academy in Charles City

**Education and Student Affairs Committee**

**Board of Regents, State of Iowa**

**June 2014**

# Vocabulary

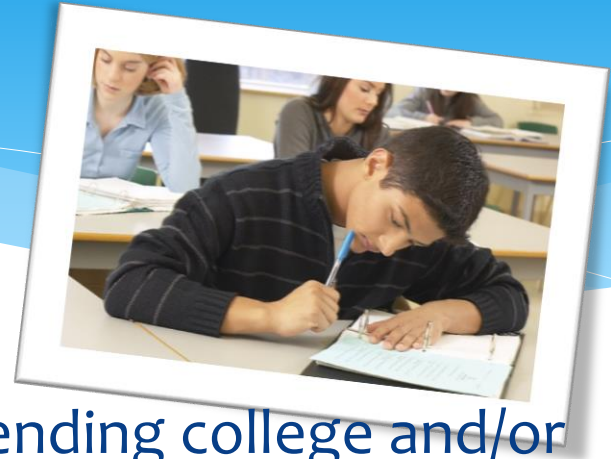
In this presentation, Deaf and Blind mean:

- Deaf - students with hearing loss from mild to profound, hard of hearing to deaf, regardless of how they communicate.
- Blind - students who are visually impaired, have low vision, use Braille or large print.
- Deafblind and students with additional disabilities.

The intent is to be inclusive and not exclusive with our vocabulary.

# Goals of the Regional Academies

- \* Ensure a continuum of quality education across the state.
- \* Provide a foundation for those attending college and/or pursuing work after high school.
  - An increased percentage of deaf and blind students will achieve proficiency in both reading and math.
  - An increased percentage of deaf and blind students will master skills as outlined within standard core curriculums.
  - Deaf and blind students will be provided opportunities for developing work ready skills.



# A Brief History

- \* The Board of Regents, State of Iowa, embarked on a study in 2012 of the **administrative and programmatic functions** of the Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired and Iowa School for the Deaf.
- \* The study looked at **future efficiencies and effectiveness** for educational services of students who are blind or deaf.



# History Continued...

- \* Findings from the study were that services ranged significantly depending on where a child lived.
  - Urban areas of the state provide more options than some rural parts of the state.
  - IEP program decisions are influenced greatly by what is currently available in the local area.



# History Continued...



- \* It was decided to establish several regional programs around the state that would include specialized teachers and other services for these students.
- \* ISD as a regional site and the only site with a residential component
- \* Vinton campus as a potential regional site, with further planning needed to examine the efficiency of using the Vinton campus (location and cost)
- \* The LEADERSHIP TEAM FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND has been meeting over a year to identify the criteria for the first location, how it will operate and how it will be financed.

# Why Charles City?



Charles City Community School District offers:

- \* a strong history of supporting special education programs.
- \* currently a limited amount of educational options for students who are blind or deaf.
- \* a geographic location where many students can commute to in no more than an hour.
- \* available classroom and office space for the program.
- \* a local community college to offer classes for transitioning students.
- \* local industry which would be open to providing job training for transitioning students.



# What will the Academy do for Charles City and the School District?



- \* Provide equitable access for blind or deaf students living in the immediate and surrounding area.
- \* Bring more jobs and tax income to the area.
  - A number of teachers and other professionals will be hired based on need.



# How soon will this occur?

- \* Plans are to start services for the fall of 2014 and to have a fully operational site in Charles City by the fall of 2015.
- \* The Iowa legislature did not allocate funds for 2014-15. We will be asking for funding in the 2015 session.



# Who will benefit from this program?

- \* All students who are blind or deaf in the geographical area, even those who do not enroll at Charles City's regional academy, will benefit from:
  - Increased professional development of teachers and other service providers in the area
  - Reduced caseloads for itinerant teachers
  - More extended learning activities to support student's learning, such as those conducted on weekends or after school.



# How will students enroll in the Academy?



- \* The Individual Education Program (IEP) teams, which include families, will continue making placement decisions.
  - It is anticipated students and families will understand the value of services and programming provided.
  - Teams may recommend that a student be enrolled full time, part time, temporarily, or more permanently through regular or extended learning schedules.

# What does it mean to be the first site?



- \* Charles City will have the ***first*** regional site, not a ***trial*** site.
- \* The LEADERSHIP TEAM FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND is defining evaluation measures.
- \* As a first site, it will reflect best practices for the other sites to model.
- \* The site will have definitive measures of outcomes to determine its success.
- \* Subsequent sites will make informed decisions regarding regional programming, based on results at the Charles City site.

# How will this affect Charles City's General Education Classrooms?

- \* Separate classrooms will be established for children with vision losses and children with hearing losses.
- \* It is anticipated some of the students will benefit by participating in general education or special education classes.
- \* Appropriate staff support will be provided in those classrooms.



# Extended Learning Opportunities

- \* Blind and visually impaired students have extended learning opportunities provided through IESBVI. They will continue in the Charles City area.
- \* Deaf and hard of hearing students will have extended learning opportunities provided through this first regional academy; as well as statewide.

# What are the next steps?



- \* Input will be sought from personnel currently serving the special needs of blind or deaf students in the area.
- \* The LEADERSHIP TEAM FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND will continue to work with Charles City staff, AEA staff, and LEA administrators within a one-hour radius of the regional academy.
- \* Work will continue with legislators to pursue funding for the regional site.
- \* Work will continue with the Department of Education on support for this school reform initiative.



# Contacts

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Questions and Discussion

June 4, 2014